

Monday, 22 April 2019 Job 6:21-23

For you have now become nothing; you see my calamity and are afraid. Have I said, 'Make me a gift'? Or, 'From your wealth offer a bribe for me'? Or, 'Deliver me from the adversary's hand'? Or, 'Redeem me from the hand of the ruthless'?

I need to read Job with a different set of eyes than I have used in the past. I need to use Job's eyes as I minister to a friend who is suffering. He has heard his best friends examine his history for failure to serve the LORD. Job sees that as a fear that they may experience the same calamities or that they are concerned that he will ask them for help that they cannot or will not provide.

Is the cry of Job's heart for help in trusting the LORD in all circumstances? Perhaps the why me, LORD is not as important as help me, LORD? Did his friends need to be better listeners than suggesters? Do I?

Tuesday, 23 April 2019 Job 9:27-35

If I say, 'I will forget my complaint, I will put off my sad face, and be of good cheer,' I become afraid of all my suffering, for I know you will not hold me innocent. I shall be condemned; why then do I labor in vain? If I wash myself with snow and cleanse my hands with lye, yet you will plunge me into a pit, and my own clothes will abhor me. For he is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him, that we should come to trial together. There is no arbiter between us, who might lay his hand on us both. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not dread of him terrify me. Then I would speak without fear of him, for I am not so in myself.

I wonder if Job is not beginning to worry about others who may take the position that he must have failed the LORD somehow. Otherwise, why would the LORD allow an innocent man to suffer thusly? He recognizes that there is no arbiter between them. He has no one standing at the right-hand of God pointing towards the redemption of the cross. He sees that he cannot speak without fear before the LORD, God, the Almighty.

Praise the LORD, I have an intercessor and need not be afraid.

Wednesday, 24 April 2019

Job 11:15, 19

Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish; you will be secure and will not fear. You will lie down, and none will make you afraid; many will court your favor.

Zophar builds quite a case based on the assumption that all this is the result of Job's sin. But this is inconsistent with Job 1:8 where the LORD declares Job to be blameless and upright, none like him in all the earth.

But Job presents a beautiful picture of faith in the face of tribulation. Yes, he does cry out with a "Why me, LORD?" but he does not curse God and die as his wife proposed. Should I be looking at this book to teach me how to live and honor the LORD, God, the Almighty at all times and under all circumstances?

Thursday, 25 April 2019 Job 13:10-11

He will surely rebuke you if in secret you show partiality. Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?

Job begins to show his resentment of the way his dearest friends have insisted upon his failure, with a very fair question. They have been so insistent that it was his failure that created this situation, that they have lost sight of their own fallen humanity.

I must never lose sight that I minister as a fallen and recovering sinner among those who are also fallen and recovering sinners. We lean on each other as we stagger towards Kingdom living.

Friday, 26 April 2019 Job 13:20-22

Only grant me two things, then I will not hide myself from your face: withdraw your hand far from me, and let not dread of you terrify me. Then call, and I will answer; or let me speak, and you reply to me.

Job politely explains to his friends that their time to pound him has come to an end. He is prepared to speak directly to the LORD, God, the Almighty and bear the consequences. It is an urgent request that he makes, a request not to let his dread of the LORD, God, the Almighty terrify him. He does not ask that the dread would leave him; he recognizes that it is a necessary element in the Fear of the LORD. But he does ask that it not terrify him, i.e., not leave him speechless.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



April 22-28, 2019

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 2 Timothy 1:3-7

I thank God, whom I serve, as my forefathers did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

We thank our Lord, as we constantly lift each other in prayer. We are thankful that we can join together as the [congregation] to carry on the Gospel as proclaimed by our forefathers and according to Your Word.

Thank You that we are constantly reminded by the faith of men like Patrick, Columbanus, Brendan and so many others whose commitment to You transcended their fears. May we also not be consumed by a spirit of timidity, but by that spirit of power, love and self-discipline that is the hallmark of lives lived in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now. Amen

To fear or not to fear, that is the question.

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. All Scripture is from the ESV unless otherwise noted. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

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Realizing the presence, promise and power
of the Kingdom of God.

Saturday, 27 April 2019

Job 15:4

But you are doing away with the fear of God and hindering meditation before God.

Old buddy, Eliphaz, takes it upon himself to put Job to rights before the LORD. Not only is he filled with windy knowledge and hindering meditation but he is doing away with the fear of the LORD. I think that digging down beneath all the rhetoric slung at Job, that there a strong resentment that Job had the temerity to ignore their advice and go his own way. Do I do that? Am I an Eliphaz? Lord. Preserve me from my pride.

Lord's Day, 28 April 2019 Psalm 119:145-147

With my whole heart, I cry; answer me, O LORD! I will keep your statutes. I call to you; save me, that I may observe your testimonies. I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.

I am powerless over sin, without the ability to keep sin in all its multitudinous forms, from controlling my life. My cry is to You, Lord, for the understanding and willingness, the righteousness, peace, and joy that is life in the Holy Spirit, life in the Kingdom, that is Your Shalom. Continue to bless me, my Lord and Master.